

London, Aug. 11, 1846.

My dear Helen:

*** This, you know, is my third visit to London. If, at first, its vastness and splendor overwhelmed me, my astonishment is rather increased than diminished, the more I attempt to take its dimensions, and look into its wonders. There are two positions in which I feel myself "less than nothing, and vanity" — a mere mote in the sun-beam — on the Atlantic ocean, and in London, the central point of human existence. Not a day passes over my head, but I deplore your absence, and long to have you by my side. The throng of people is immense, without end, go where you will — and yet this is the season of the year when tens of thousands of the inhabitants are out of the city, rustivating in the country, or enjoying themselves by the sea-shore. The Thames river presents a curious spectacle, at all hours. In addition to the multitude of vessels from various parts of the globe, the river is crowded with steamers of all sizes and descriptions, gliding up and down with great velocity, and carrying multitudes of people, who are enabled to travel a long distance for a mere trifle. Nothing can be more animating or picturesque than to stand on any one of the fine bridges which span the Thames, and look up and down the river, to see the innumerable conveyances which are flying in every direction. As for the streets in London, their name is legion, and in length many of them seem interminable. Yet, huge as is the city, and complicated as are its arrangements, and mysterious as are its modes of existence, every thing goes on with a regularity and precision truly marvellous. There is no violent collision — scarcely any jostle — the mechanism is perfect, "like clock-work" — and no one is allowed or expected to interfere with another.

there she stood, in expectancy, until the omnibus came along, and I was whirled out of ~~her~~ sight. My heart sunk within me ~~to~~ think of the horrid fate of that unfortunate creature. She seemed to me like one just entering on her frightful career. I thought of her as a sister — as my sister — seduced, it may be, by some villain, who had pledged to her eternal fidelity. I thought of her as a daughter — as my daughter — once the hope, the pride, the ornament of the family circle — now a castaway, and forever shut out from virtuous society. To think of such a one selling her body nightly, for a few shillings to furnish her with ^{can} bread — no matter to whom, provided she ~~could~~ obtain the price! What unutterable loathing must possess her soul — and yet, so inexorable is society, this she must do, or die of starvation in the streets. O, horrible doom!

As I rode home to George Thompson's, a long distance through the city, I observed multitudes of others, (for they are easily detected,) some standing at the corners of the streets, others in front of public buildings which are much frequented, and others sauntering along, looking every one boldly in face whom they hoped to victimize. It is an awful state of society, requiring the most sturdy virtue and the deepest religious principles to save one from contamination.

Lovingly yours, and yours only,
Wm. Lloyd Garrison.

Aug 11 46 There is another thing, prevalent in this city, which is calculated to shock and overwhelm a good man from the United States. It is the immense number of prostitutes, ^{who} ~~which~~ swarm the streets every night for the vilest purposes. You must remember that London is almost as light in the night as it is in the day-time; hence, every person is readily seen and identified. But these poor creatures know no shame, and are driven to this disgusting course by the most terrible necessities. They are of all grades in appearance, from the most fashionably dressed to the most ragged. They are very importunate to all passers-by, often taking them by the arm, and frequently accosting them in a familiar manner. Hence, there is a perpetual temptation, and a very formidable one, held out, especially to young, unmarried men, to be licentious. In fact, personal purity on the part of married men, I am told, is scarcely regarded at all, taking them in a mass. Last evening, I was waiting for an omnibus, in company with a venerable friend, in front of the Lord Mayor's mansion, when a very handsomely dressed young lady passed me, with a parasol in her hand, and gave me the most earnest glances, in a manner revealing her desire, yet not boldly or impudently. She had a sweet countenance, almost feminine, and a beautiful form. After advancing a few steps, she stopped, turned round, and in the most insinuating manner ~~acted~~ as though she expected me to go with her.

Gravesend is now a place of ~~great~~
~~great~~ resort, though it was once notorious for
the resort of sailors and lewd women. It is 20
miles down the Thames. Mrs. Thompson has been
residing there for a few weeks, with her children,
for the benefit of their health. I have just been
down with George Thompson, where I spent the night,
and had a very pleasant entertainment. The
place was full of visitors, and the scene was a
very lively one. In the evening, we went to a
beautiful garden, of immense extent, called
Rosherville, some two or three miles from Graves-
end, which has been reclaimed from a worth-
less soil, and beautified and adorned in a truly
wonderful manner. The next morning, we
all came up together - Mrs. Thompson and the
children will remain at home for the season.
The latter are six in number - three boys and
four girls. The two eldest girls are quite tall,
and on the whole interesting. They all lack an-
imation, and bear a much stronger resem-
blance to their mother than to their father.

It is still doubtful whether I shall
be able to see Elizabeth Pease before her
return. She is now living in a retired place
in the country, and sees nobody. Her health
is very critical. She has probably an en-
largement of the heart, and in her early days
was subject to epileptic fits. The sickness
and death of her almost idolized father have
caused a great prostration of her physical
system.